

A Midsummer
Masquerade

THE GENTLE GRAFTER

BY O. HENRY.
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"Satan," said Jeff Peters, "is a hard boss to work for. When other people are having their vacation is when he keeps you the busiest. As old Dr. Watte or St. Paul or some other diabolical says: 'He always find some body for idle hands to do.'"

"I remember one summer when me and my partner, Andy Tucker, tried to take a lay-off from our professional and business duties; but it seems that our work followed us wherever we went."

"Now, with a preacher it's different. He can throw off his responsibilities and enjoy himself. On the 31st of May he wraps mosquito netting and tinfoil around the pulpit, grabs his niblick, brevity and fishing pole and hikes for Lake Como or Atlantic City, according to the size of the loudness with which he has been called by his congregation. And, sir, for three months he don't have to think about business except to hunt around in Deuteronomy and Proverbs and Timothy to find texts to cover and exculpate such little midsummer penances as dropping a couple of loopy doors on rouge or teaching a Presbyterian widow to swim."

"But I was going to tell you about mine and Andy's summer vacation that wasn't one."

"We was tired of finance and all the branches of unsanctified ingenuity. Even Andy, whose brain rarely ever stopped working, began to make noises like a tennis racket."

"Heigh, ho!" says Andy. "I'm tired. I've got that steam up the yacht Corsair and ho for the Riviera! feeling, I want to loaf and indite my soul, as Walt Whitier says. I want to play pinocle with Merry del Val or give a lousout to the tenants on my Tarrytown estates or do a monologue at a Chautauque picnic in kills or something summery and outside the line of routine sandbagging."

"Patience," says I. "You'll have to climb higher in the profession before you can taste the laurels that crown the footprints of the great captains of industry. Now, what I'd like, Andy," says I, "would be a summer sojourn in a mountain village far from scenes of luscious bloodshed and overcapitalization. I'm tired, too, and a month or so of sinlessness ought to leave us in good shape to begin again to take away the white man's burdens in the fall."

"Andy fell in with the rest cure idea at once, so we struck the general passenger agents of all the railroads for summer resort literature, and took a week to study out where we should go. I reckon the first passenger agent in the world was that man Genesis. But there wasn't much competition in his day, and when he said, 'The Lord made the earth in six days, and all very good,' he hadn't any idea to what extent the press agents of the summer hotels would plagiarize from him later on."

"When we finished the booklets we perceived easy, that the United States from Passadunkeng, Me., to El Paso, and from Skagway to Key West, was a paradise of glorious mountain peaks, crystal lakes, now laid eggs, golf, girls, garages, cooling breezes, straw rides, open plumbing and tennis; and all within two hours ride."

"So me and Andy dumps the books and back window and packs our trunks and takes the 6 o'clock tortoise Flyer for Crow Knob, a kind of a denier resort in the mountains on the line of Tennessee and North Carolina."

"We were directed to a kind of private hotel called Woodchuck Inn, and thither me and Andy bent and almost broke our footsteps over the rocks and stumps. The inn set back from the road in a big grove of trees, and it looked fine with its broad porches and a lot of women in white dresses rocking in the shade. The rest of Crow Knob was a postoffice and some scenery set at an angle of 45 degrees and a welkin."

"Well, sir, when we got to the gate who do you suppose comes down the walk to greet us? Old Smoke-em-out Smithers, who used to be the best open air painless dentist and electric liver paid fatter in the southwest."

"Old Smoke-em-out is dressed clerical, and has the mingled air of a landlady and a claim jumper. Which aspect he corroborated by telling us that he is the host and perpetrator of Woodchuck Inn. I introduces Andy, and we talk about a few volatile topics such as will go around at meetings of boards of directors and old associates like us three were. Old Smoke-em-out leads us into a kind of summer house in the yard near the gate and took up the harp of life and smote on all the chords with his mighty right."

"Gents," says he, "I'm glad to see"

Drake of Murfreesborough, a book-you. Maybe you can help me out of a scrape. I'm getting a bit old for street work, so I leased the dogdays emporium so the good things would come to me. Two weeks before the season opened I gets a letter signed Lieutenant Perry and one from the Duke of Marlborough, each wanting to engage board for part of the summer."

"Well, sir, you gents know what a big thing for an obscure hustler! It would be to have for guests two gentlemen whose names are famous from long association with icebergs and the Coburgs. So I prints a lot of handbills announcing that Woodchuck Inn would shelter these distinguished boarders during the summer, except in places where it leaked, and I sends 'em out to towns around as far as Knoxville and Charlotte and Fish Dam and Bowling Green."

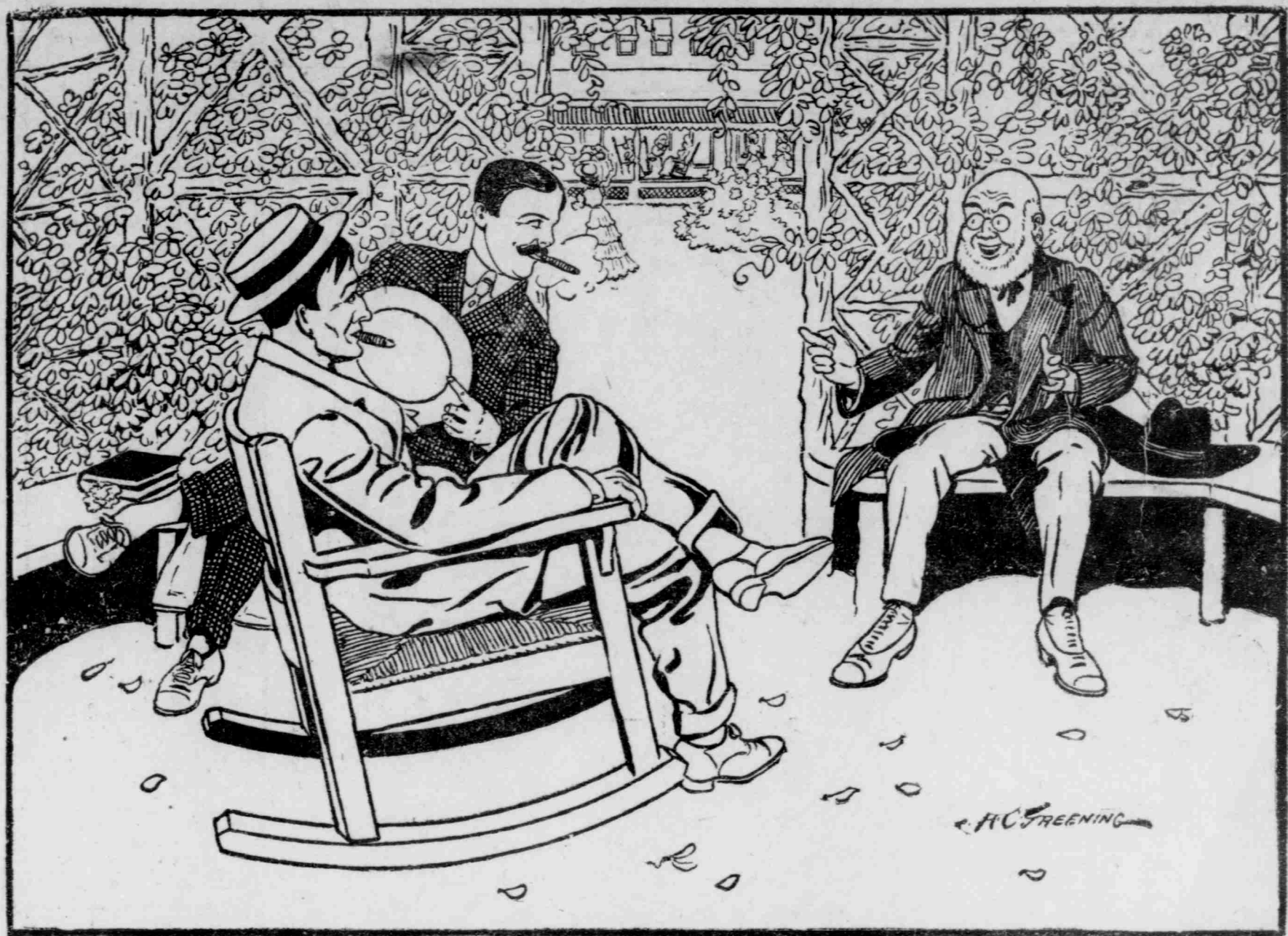
"And now look up there on the porch, gents," says Smoke-em-out, "at them disconsolate specimens of their fair sex waiting for the arrival of the duke and the lieutenant. The house is packed from rafters to cellar with hero worshippers."

"There's four normal school teachers and two abnormal; there's three high school graduates between 37 and 42; there's two literary old maids and one that can write; there's a couple of society women and a lady from Haw river. Two cloutionists are bunking in the corner, and I've put cuts in the hay loft for the cook and the society editress of the Chattanooga Opera Glass. You see how names draw gents."

"Well," says I, "how is it that you seem to be biting your thumbs at good luck? You didn't use to be that way."

"I ain't through," says Smoke-em-out. "Yesterday was the day for the advent of the august personages. I goes down to the depot to welcome 'em. Two apparently animate substances gets off the train, both carrying bags full of croquet mallets and these magic lanterns with push buttons."

"I compares these integers with the original signatures to the letters—and, well, gents, I reckon the mistake was due to my poor eyesight. Instead of being the lieutenant, the daisy chain and wild verbera explorer was none other than Levi T. Peavy, a soda water clerk from Asheville. And the Duke of Marlborough turned out to be Thea"



"CAN YE DO IT GENTS?," HE ASKS."

keeper in a grocery. What did I do? I kicked 'em both back on the train and watched 'em depart for the lowlands, the low."

"Now you see the fix I'm in, gents," I told the ladies that the notorious visitors had been detained on the road by some unavoidable circumstances that made a noise like an ice jam and an heirress, but they would arrive a day or two later. When they find out that they've been deceived," says Smoke-em-out, "every yard of cross-barred muslin and natural waved switch in the house will pack up and leave. It's a hard deal," says Smoke-em-out."

"Friend," says Andy, touching the old man on the acrophagus, "why this jeremiad when the polar regions and the portals of Blenheim are conspiring to hand you prosperity on a hall-marked silver salver? We have arrived."

"A light breaks out on Smoke-em-out's face."

"Can ye do it, gents?" he asks. "Could ye do it? Could ye play the polar man and the little duke for the nice ladies? Will ye do it?"

"I see that Andy is superimposed with his old hankering for the oral and polyglot system of buncoing. That man had a vocabulary of about 10,000 words and synonyms, which arrayed themselves into contraband sophistries and parables when they came out."

"Listen," says Andy to old Smoke-em-out. "Can we do it? You behold before you, Mr. Smithers, two of the finest equipped men on earth for in-

veiling the proletariat, whether by word of mouth, sleight of hand, or swiftness of foot. Dukes come and go, explorers go and get lost, but me and Jeff Peters," says Andy, "go after the comers forever. If you say so, we're the two illustrious gents you were expecting. And you will find," says Andy, "that we'll give you the true local color of the title roles of the aurora borealis to the dual port-cullis."

"Old Smoke-em-out is delighted. He takes me and Andy up to the inn by an arm apiece, telling us on the way that the finest fruits of the can and luxuries of the fast freights should be ours without price as long as we would stay."

"On the porch Smoke-em-out says: 'Ladies, I have the honor to introduce his gracefulness the Duke of Marlborough and the famous inventor of the north pole, Lieutenant Perry.'"

"The skirts all flutter and the rocking chairs squeak as me and Andy bows and then goes on in with old Smoke-em-out to register. And then we washed up and turned our cuffs, and the landlord took us to the rooms he'd been saving for us and got out a demijohn of North Carolina real mountain dew."

"I expected trouble when Andy began to drink. He has the artistic metempsychosis which is half drunk when sober and looks down on airships when stimulated."

"After lingering with the demijohn me and Andy goes out on the porch, where the ladies are to begin to keep. We sit in two special chairs

and then the schoolma'ams and literati hunched their rockers close around us."

"One lady says to me: 'How did that last venture of yours turn out, sir?'"

"Now, I'd clean forgot to have an understanding with Andy which I was to be duke or the lieutenant. And I couldn't tell from her question whether she was referring to Arctic or matrimonial expeditions. So I gave an answer that would cover both cases."

"Well, ma'am," says I, "it was a freeze out—right smart of a freeze out, ma'am."

"And then the floodgates of Andy's perorations was opened and I knew which one of the renowned ostensible guests I was supposed to be. I wasn't either. Andy was both. And still furthermore it seemed that he was trying to be the mouthpiece of the entire British nobility and of Arctic exploration from Sir John Franklin down to the union of corn whiskey and the conscientious fictional form that Mr. W. D. Howletts admires so much."

"Ladies," says Andy, smiling semi-circularly, "I am truly glad to visit America. I do not consider the gas charta," says he, "or gas balloons or snowshoes in any way a detriment to the beauty and charm of your American women, skyscrapers or the architecture of your icebergs. The next time," says Andy, "that I go after the north pole all the Vanderbilts in Greenland would be able to turn me out in the cold—I mean make it hot for me."

"Tell us about one of your trips, lieutenant," says one of the normals.

"Sure," says Andy, getting the decision over a hiccup. "It was in the spring of last year that I sailed the 'Castle of Blenheim' up to latitude 87 degrees Fahrenheit and beat the record. Ladies," says Andy, "it was a sad sight to see a duke allied by a civil and liturgical chattel mortgage to one of your first families lost in a region of semi-annual days. And then he goes on. 'At four bells we sighted Westminster abbey, but there was not a drop to eat. At noon we threw out five snugglers and the ship rose fifteen knots higher. At midnight,' continues Andy, 'the restaurants closed. Sitting on a cake of ice we ate seven dogs. All around us was snow and ice. Six times a night the boatswain rose up and tore a leaf off the calendar so we could keep time with the barometer. At 12,' says Andy, 'with a lot of anguish in his face, three huge polar bears sprang down the hatchway, into the cabin. And then—'"

"What then, lieutenant?" says a schoolma'am, excitedly.

"Andy gives a loud sob. 'The duchess shook me,' he cries out, and slides off of the chair and weeps on the porch."

"Well, of course, that fixed the scheme. The women boarders all left the next morning. The landlord wouldn't speak to us for two days, but when he found we had money to pay our way he loosened up."

"So me and Andy had a quiet, restful summer after all, coming away from Crow Knob with \$1,100 that we picked out of old Smoke-em-out playing seven up."

Mr. Dooley on The Hague Conference

By F. P. Dunne

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"I see," said Mr. Hennessey, "we're goin' to find th' navy to th' Passyfic."

"I see we're not too," said Mr. Dooley. "There's two sides to it-try question an' in Washington there are twinty-two to it-try answer. Wan day sees th' navy tearin' around th' Horn, not to intimidat th' Japs, mind ye, but only to show them that if they're lookin' in fr trouble they can have it without movin' out iv their back yards. Another day th' navy is still at home explodin' itself. Th' navy gun her name was Maude. I wudden't want to be in front iv wan iv thim gr-great injines iv destruction but if I had to make me choice an' all th' places underneath were taken, I'd rather be in front thim behind. Fr purposes iv safety they ought to be pointed th' other way. If war comes th' minyit we turn our guns on th' inimy 't will be all over with him."

"No, sir, I can't tell whether th' navy is goin' to spend th' rest iv its days protectin' what Hogan calls our insulted possessions in th' Orient or whether it is to remain in th' neighborhood iv Barnstable makin' th' glaziers iv New England rich beyond th' dreams iv New England avarice, which ar-re hopeful dreams. Th' cabinet is divided, th' secrecy iv th' navy is divided, th' president is divided an' th' press is divided. Wan great editor, fr'm his post iv danger in Paris, has ordered th' navy to report at San Francisco at four eight next Thursday. Another great editor livin' in Germany has warned it that it will do so at its peril. Nawthin' is so fine as to see a great modern journalist unbend fr'm his mighty task iv selectin' fr'm a bunch iv photygrafts th' prettiest cook iv Flatbush or engineerin' with his great furrowed brain th' Topsy Fizzle compytion to trifle with some light warm-weather subject like international law or war. But men such as these can do anything."

"But, anyhow, what difference does it make whether th' navy goes to th' Passyfic or not? If it goes at all it won't be to make war. They've dumped all th' fourteen-inch shells into th' sea. Th' ammunition hoists ar-re filled with American Beauty roses an' orchids. Th' guns are loaded with confetti. Th' officers drink nawthin' stronger than vanilla an' strawberry mixed. Whin th' tars go ashore they hurry at wanst to th' home iv the Christian Endeavor society or throng th' free libraries readin' religious poetry. Me frind, Bob Evans, is goin' to contribute a series iv articles to th' Ladies' Home Journal on crosshaying. Fr th' Hague Peace Conference has abolished war, Hinnissy. Ye've seen th' last war ye'll ever see, me boy."

"Th' Hague conference, Hinnissy, was got up be th' Czar iv Rooshyia just before he moved his army again th' Japs. It was a quiet day at Saint Petersburg. Th' prime minister had just been blown up with dynamite, th' Czar's uncle had been shot an' wan iv his cousins was exiprin' fr'm a dose iv prosoic acid. All was comparative peace. In th' warrum summer's afternooon th' Czar felt almost drowsy as he set in his rife palace an' listened to th' low, monotonous drone iv bombs bein' hurled at th' Brobojensky guards, an' picked th' broken glass out iv th' drink that'd just been brought to him be an aged servitor who was prisident iv th' Saint Petersburg lodge iv Pa-thriotic Assassins. Th' monarch's mind turned to th' subick iv war an' he says to himself: 'What a dreadful thing it is that such a beautiful wuruld shud be marred be thousands iv innocent men bein' sint out to shoot each other fr no cause whin they might better stay at home an' wurruk fr their rife masters' he says. 'I will disguise meself as a moojik an' go over to th' tillgraff office an' summon a meetin' iv th' Powers,' he says."

"That's how it come about. All th' powers sint dillygates an' a gr-reat

many iv th' weaknesses did so too. They met last week in Holland an' they have been devotin' all their time since to makin' fr impossible in th' future. Th' meetin' was opened with an acrimonious debate over a resolution offered be a dillygate fr'm Paraguay callin' fr'immedj disarmament, which is th' same, Hinnissy, as notifyin' th' Powers to turn in their guns to th' man at th' dure. This was carried be a very heavy majority. Among those that voted in favor iv it were: Paraguay, Uruguay, Switzerland, China, Belgium an' San Marino. Opposed were England, France, Rooshyia, Germany, Italy, Austree, Japan an' th' United States."

"This was regarded be all present as a happy augury. Th' conviation thim discussed a resolution offered be th' Turkish dillygate abolishin' war altogether. This also was carried, on'y England, France, Rooshyia, Germany, Italy, Austree, Japan an' th' United States votin' no."

"This made th' way clear fr th' discussion iv th' larger question iv how future wars shud be conducted in th' best interests iv peace. Th' conference considered th' possibility iv abolishin' th' mushroom bullet, which enterin' th' intercity iv th' inimy not much larger than a marble soon opens its dainty petals an' goes whirlin' through th' air, minthry can like a pin-wheel. Th' Chinese dillygate said that he regarded this here instrument iv peace as highly painful. He had an aunt in Pekin, an estimable lady, unmarried, two hundred an' fifty years iv age, who raycelved wan without warnin' durin' th' gallant rescue iv Pekin fr'm th' foreign legations a few years ago. He cud speak with feelin' on th' subick as th' Chinese army did not use these pro-flictyles but were armed with bean-shooters. Th' English dillygate opposed th' resolution. 'It is,' says he, 'quite thrue that these here pellets are in-

many cases harmful to th' digestion, but I think it wud be goin' too far to suggest that they be abolished ontirly. Thir manyfacturer is better understood be th' subick races,' he says. 'I suppose wan iv these pellets might throw a white man off his feed, but we have abundant proof that whin injected into a black man they gr-reatly improve his moral tone. An' after all th' improvimint iv th' moral tone is, gintlemen, a far greater matter thim anny mere physical question. We know fr'im experience in South Africa that th' charmin' bullet won't under discussion did much to change conditions in that enlightened an' July party iv his majesty's domains. Th' darky that happened to stop wan was all th' better fr it. He retired fr'm labor an' give up his squalid an' bigamous life,' he says. 'I am in favor, however, iv restrictin' their use to encounters with races that we properly consider inferioryr.' he says. Th' dillygate fr'm Sinagambya rose to a question iv privilege. 'State ye'er question iv privilege,' says th' chairman. 'I wud like to have th' windows open,' says th' dillygate fr'm Sinagambya. 'I feel faint,' he says."

"Th' Hon'able Joe Choate, dillygate fr'm th' United States, moved that in future wars enlisted men shud not wear ear-rings. Carried, only Italy votin' no."

"Th' conference thim discussed blowin' up th' inimy with dynamite, poisonin' him, shootin' th' wounded, settin' fire to infants, bilin' prisoners-iv-war in hot lard an' robbin' graves. Some excitment was created durin' th' talk be th' dillygate fr'm th' cannibal islands, who proposed that prisoners-iv-war be eaten. Th' German dillygate thought that this was carryin' a special gift iv wan power too far. It wud give th' cannibal islands a distinct advantage in case iv war, as European sojers were accustomed to horses. Th' English dillygate said that while much

could be said against a practice which personally seemed to him rather unsportsmanlike, still he felt he must reserve th' right iv anny cannibal allies iv Brittainya to go as far as they liked."

"Th' Hon'able Joe Choate moved that in future wars no military band shud be considered complete without a base-drum. Carried."

"Th' entire South American dillygation said that no nation ought to go to war because another nation wanted to hang it up on th' slate. Th' English dillygate was much incensed. 'Why, gintlemen,' says he, 'if ye deprived us iv th' right to collect debts be killin' th' debtor ye wud take away fr'm war its entire moral purpose. I must ask ye again to cease thinkin' on this subick in a gross matterly way an' consider th' moral side alone,' he says. Th' conference was much moved be this pathetic speech, th' dillygate fr'm France wept softly into his handkerchief an' th' dillygate fr'm Germany went over an' forcibly took an onion-faced goold watch fr'm th' dillygate fr'm Vinzwala."

"Th' Hon'able Joe Choate moved that in all future wars horses shud be fed with hay wheriver possible. Carried."

"A long informal talk on th' reinthroduction iv scalpin' followed. At last th' dillygate fr'm China arose an' says he: 'I'd like to know what war is. What is war anyhow?' 'Th' Lord knows, we don't,' says th' chairman. 'We're all professors iv colleges or lawyers whin we're home,' he says. 'Is it war to shoot my aunt?' says th' dillygate fr'm China. Cries iv 'No, no.' 'Is it war to hook me father's best hat that he left behind whin he bashfully hurried away to escape th' attention iv European sojery?' says th' dillygate fr'm China. 'Robbery is a necessary part iv war,' says th' English dillygate. 'Fr th' purpose iv enforcin' a moral example,' he says,

and then the schoolma'ams and literati hunched their rockers close around us."

"One lady says to me: 'How did that last venture of yours turn out, sir?'"

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REMOVED AT LAST.

(Harper's Weekly.)

A West Point cadet, some years ago, was told by his instructor to draw up the plans and specifications for a railroad viaduct to connect two high hills, between which ran a small stream.

In due course an excellent set of drawings was presented, one showing the bridge in its completion with a sketch of the surroundings, and on which sat two men, with their legs hanging over the sides, fishing. The drawing was returned with the request that the men be removed from the bridge.

Upon receiving the paper the second time the professor discovered that his instructions had been carried out, but that the two men were seated on the bank of the stream, still in quest of representatives of the finny tribe.

Again was the paper returned, and this time with positive orders to remove the men from the drawing altogether. Imagine the consternation which overcame the features of the "learned instructor" upon receiving the paper for the third time to find two little graves and tombstones near the bank of the stream. His orders had been obeyed, and the men removed altogether.

Needless to say, the cadet was forgiven for this breach of discipline, and the unintentional disrespect to his senior officer was overlooked.

FLOWERS THAT CHANGE.

(New Orleans Times-Democrat.)

"This bed of flowers was blue this morning, and now it is pink. That one was white and it is now rose. The one by the hedge was yellow yesterday, and today it is purple."

The gardener chuckled delightedly. "I call 'em my fairy flower beds, ma'am," he said. "You see, they change color. It's a grand idea, isn't it? It gives a garden such variety."

"But I didn't know that any flowers changed their color."

"Oh, yes. That bed you first mentioned is the tri-color phlox. At sunrise it is blue, and in the afternoon it is pink."

"The one to the right is hibiscus-hibiscus mutabilis. It goes through three changes in the day, from white in the morning to rose at noon and to red at sunset."

"The bed by the hedge is the lantana. The lantana is yellow one day, orange the next and red the third. Its changes are slow."

"There are other flowers, too, that change. There's the cheiranthus chamaecrista, that shifts from white to yellow and from yellow to red. There's the gladiolus versicolor, that's brown in the morning and blue in the evening. There's the coleus scandens, that moves slowly from greenish white to a deep violet."